(e) The loss, if any, to the banks on account of such strike cannot be quantified.

Impact of price hike on Wholesale Price Index

†1399. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards the statement of the member of Planning Commission and Chairman of Committee on Review of Wholesale Price Index, that with the increase in prices of petroleum products in the first week of September, 2005, there will be increase in inflation on the basis of 1.5 per cent Wholesale Price Index;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) the effect of the above price hike on the Wholesale Price Index on the basis of the estimation made by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S. S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) to (c) According to the information available, the Member, Planning Commission had felt that the increase in the prices of mineral oils in the WPI basket between July, 2004 to September, 2005 would have an impact on the wholesale price index. This impact would be partly determined by the weight of mineral oils in the WPI basket. The WPI (Base 1993-94 =100) was 186.0 on week ending July 3, 2004 and 188.9 on week ending October 1,2005 which represents an increase of 1.56 per cent.

Merger of banks

1400. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any direction/proposal to be followed for merger of banks;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.